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**Title:**  
Foreword

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## Foreword

In May 1988 I returned to Fiji for the first time for eight years. I went as part of a delegation from the Australian Labor Party. I had attempted to go in 1987 but the regime had then refused to allow me in.

For six days my companions and I saw a wide variety of citizens of Fiji, from early morning till late at night, Fijian villagers, urban dwellers and chiefs, <sup>Indian</sup> cane farmers, shopkeepers, lawyers, doctors, millworkers, religious leaders of ~~all~~ <sup>many</sup> persuasions, members of the European & Chinese communities. From them all emerged a picture of Fiji today which is horrifying.

Fiji is now ruled by a military regime for which the former Alliance ministers & members involved are merely a facade. Sitiveni Rabuka, a

sorcerer's apprentice unleashed by Ratu Itara and his associates to overthrow the legitimate & democratically elected Government of Dr. Bavadra, now determines basic domestic policy. What this is may be understood from a book ghost-written for him and now promoted in book-stores throughout Fiji, "No other way." In Boys Own Paper style, the book reveals confused, ignorant, prejudiced views of his society and the world. As projected upon the hapless populations of Fiji this means that a militarised police force & a politicised racist military are used as instruments to harass & threaten ordinary citizens and their families. The litany of beatings, cruel and inhuman treatment, & the constant threat of such things appalled us. The Indian population has become demoralised and without hope for the future. The Fijian

population has become divided. Institutions like schools, hospitals and the public service generally are seriously disrupted by the persistent promotion of racial division. In promotion of such Fijians only as the regime considers reliable cronyism is the criterion for advancement.

In its proposals for a so-called new constitution the Indian population & effectively the Fijian commonsense other than a small coterie approved by the regime will be effectively disfranchised.

Rule in Fiji is to be provided by the military regime supporting a government selected by an oligarchy dominated by the old eastern confederation of Fijians whose internecine struggles dominated life in Fiji in the last century and led to the ~~cession~~ ceding of the islands to Great Britain.

A feature of this is an aggressive use of Methodist  
fundamentalism as an instrument not of religion  
but of civil repression.

The consequences to the ordinary resident  
of Fiji are tragic - not merely the loss of human rights,  
but widespread poverty, hunger, malnutrition.

To understand the background to how all this  
came about a careful dispassionate scholarly  
study was necessary. This is that book.

It is required reading for those who would  
know Fiji Today.



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WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF  
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